

VZCZCXRO4442

PP RUEHAG RUEHAST RUEHBC RUEHDA RUEHDBU RUEHDE RUEHDF RUEHFL RUEHIHL
RUEHIK RUEHKUK RUEHKW RUEHLA RUEHLN RUEHLZ RUEHPOD RUEHROV RUEHSR
RUEHVK RUEHYG
DE RUEHAK #1371/01 1551354
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 041354Z JUN 07
FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2392
INFO RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUCNRAQ/IRAQ COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 ANKARA 001371

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR H

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PTER](#) [MOPS](#) [IZ](#) [TU](#)

SUBJECT: CODEL NELSON AND CONGRESSIONAL STUDY GROUP ON
TURKEY WITH TURKISH PARLIAMENTARY SPEAKER ARINC

¶1. (SBU) SUMMARY: Turkish Parliamentary Speaker Bulent Arinc met May 28 with Codel Nelson and the Congressional Study Group on Turkey. Arinc focused his remarks on the solid, longstanding bilateral relationship between the U.S. and Turkey as well as Turkish concerns about the situation in Iraq and the presence of the terrorist PKK in northern Iraq. Arinc warned that the Turkish public supports taking direct military action against the PKK presence in Iraq if the U.S. and GOI fail to do so and that Turkey "could not be held accountable" if forced to take action to defend itself. END SUMMARY

¶2. (U) During the hour-long joint meeting, Speaker Arinc told Codel Nelson and the Congressional Study Group that Turkey places a high value on the bilateral relationship and the many official U.S. delegations it receives. Arinc urged the U.S. to be "honest" in its relationship with Turkey but he praised the long-standing friendship and cooperation between the two countries, starting in the 1950s in Korea and extending to the Balkans, Afghanistan and the Middle East, and expressed the hope this cooperation would continue. Arinc emphasized to his visitors that Turkey is a modern and peaceful country, despite the current political crisis and regional problems.

¶3. (U) Representative Whitfield said the United States also values its friendship with Turkey and noted that Members of Congress and the United States government are committed to strengthening relations between our two countries. He acknowledged the challenges that continued violence and political instability in Iraq and lack of progress toward a settlement in Cyprus continue to pose to Turkey as the July 22 election nears. Whitfield also expressed support for Turkey's bid to join the European Union and offered to help however possible in that effort. Senator Nelson called his delegation's trip a symbol of the esteem and value we place on the bilateral relationship, and said the purpose of their visit was to gain a better understanding of mutual views and differences on world events, including Iraq.

¶4. (U) Arinc said the GOT believes ethnic differences and religions should be respected in a democracy, and expressed the hope that developments in Iraq would not threaten the long-term stability of Turkey. However, he added Turks are watching great loss of life in Iraq, including those of U.S. troops, and are concerned about increasing divisions within Iraq. Arinc noted Turkey believes that a referendum in Kirkuk would be damaging to the entire region. Acknowledging that the debate over U.S. involvement in Iraq continues in Congress, he said that the U.S. should have confidence in Turkey. It shares Iraq's geography and history. It

understands Iraq and knows the way toward a peaceful democracy. Turkey is a reliable ally and should not be exchanged.

¶15. (SBU) Arinc said Turkey is especially sensitive to PKK terror and to its own territorial integrity. The U.S. has not implemented its promises on the PKK and this impacts domestic politics in Turkey. Referring to the recent terrorist attack in Ankara as well as to Turkish troops killed fighting the PKK, Arinc said that an action plan should be implemented to counter the threat and lamented the lack of concrete results produced by the TU-US-IZ trilateral process after eight months. Developments in Iraq, he went on, upset the Turkish people and this gives rise to anti-American sentiment in Turkey. Arinc, however, emphasized that there is no general, systematic anti-Americanism in Turkey. Regarding a cross-border military operation to attack PKK camps, Arinc said a majority of Turks are in agreement about it. He knows U.S. concerns, but said Parliament is ready for the authorization. He said Turkey "should not be held accountable" for such a decision, since it is losing soldiers right now.

¶16. (SBU) Rep. Whitfield responded that some in Congress share Turkey's concern about the U.S. military unwillingness to take on the PKK. Senator Nelson expressed appreciation for Turkish support in Afghanistan. He understood Turkey's frustration with being asked to hold back on going into northern Iraq. Nelson also conveyed sympathy for the recent terrorist attack in Ankara and noted that fifty U.S. soldiers from his own state of Nebraska had died in Iraq. However, Sen. Nelson urged that any GOT action against the PKK in Iraq be based on a common plan with the U.S.

¶17. (U) Codel Nelson and the Congressional Study Group on Turkey have cleared this message.

ANKARA 00001371 002 OF 002

Visit Ankara's Classified Web Site at
<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/eur/ankara/>

WILSON